Summary of the

HAWAIIAN SOVEREIGNTY ECONOMIC SYMPOSIUM

held at

William S. Richardson School of Law,

University of Hawaii

June 5, 1993

The first Hawaiian Sovereignty Economic Symposium drew over 100 participants from among Hawaii's political, legal, business and grass-roots native communities to address the subject of the economic viability of Hawaiian sovereignty. Besides the participants who attended the symposium at the Richardson School of Law, a radio audience joined the proceedings through live broadcast of the full event through the cooperation of the Hawaiian National Broadcast Corporation and Hawaii Public Radio. This report is an attempt to capture some of the main themes raised there, to encourage continuing public discussion and to provide the groundwork for a second symposium on September 25, 1993.

This series of symposiums can not be separated from the increasing attention to Hawaii's history of change from an independent nation to a non-self governing territory to the present relationship with the United States of America. The Hawaii society, led generally by the native Hawaiian "activists" over the past 20+ years, are now coming face to face with issues of change, whether they be political, social, cultural or economic. The events in the world demonstrate an ever evolving realignment of peoples and nations, in which arch enemies, the United States of America and Germany or Japan, are now among the closest aligned countries, while prior friends have sided on opposite ends of the cold war. From our cousins of the Pacific to people across the world, we are witnessing political readjustments resulting in the emergence or reemergence of nations, redefinitions of political relations, and the creation of new standards of rights of peoples.

History demonstrates the irresistibility of change. Resisting change, refusing to anticipate change, denying change will only result in unnecessary burden, backwardness and blaming. The question for us should be not whether or not we will undergo change. The question is what changes should we guide human affairs toward?

Dreaming is perhaps one of the most important steps in the process of change. In the case of a people invaded, occupied, enslaved, resocialized, colonized, of in some other form deprived of their self-expression or self-determination, a people's ability, willingness, daring to dream forms a crucial stage in their change to come. Failing to dream results in being overwhelmed by the changes, falling victims to forces which become uncontrollable, getting placed in positions which may be worse than before.

Public dreaming is a necessary step in a democratic process. Such dreaming helps to bring individual wishful thinking into more community built ideas and hopes. Public dreaming is to engage all facets of the society in participating in raising aspirations and identifying choices to be eventually made in the process of democracy. But public dreaming must be accomplished in an environment which allows for no restraints, dreaming without reservation of being wrong, of making a mistake, of visioning an unpopular result. It requires fundamental respect for one another's expressions, a healthy regard for an individual's right to an opinion. Public dreaming is one of the most crucial stages of liberating a society.

The Hawaiian Sovereignty Economic Symposium was organized to create that environment for public dreaming, an environment where there were no rights or wrongs, where the reality of each individual or organization reflected the truth of our current situation and aspirations - a place of safety where people could dream the impossible dreams. The idea of a series of symposiums was taken from a number of sources, including the State legislature which in 1991 adopted House Concurrent Resolution No. 147 stating in part:

RECOGNIZING THE YEAR 1993 AS THE 100TH YEAR SINCE

THE OVERTHROW

OF THE INDEPENDENT NATION OF HAWAII

Whereas, the year 1993 holds special significance for everyone who has been a part of Hawaii over the last 100 years for it marks the century point after the United States military committed the first overt act to overthrow the independent nation of Hawaii; and

Whereas, the Legislature recognizes the increasing discussions and debate here in Hawaii and at the Congress of the United States of the consequence such an overt act of military aggression against a peaceful and independent nation has to the citizens and descendants of that nation today; and

Whereas, the Legislature believes that the proper status of Hawaii's indigenous people within the political regime of the State of Hawaii and the United States of America has still not reached its final stage and is still in the process of evolution; and

Whereas, the Legislature recognizes the even broader issue of the proper status of all people, irrespective of race, to exercise the right to self-determination; and

Whereas, the Legislature believes that the full range of consideration of Hawaii's people's rights and freedoms must be completely explored in order to bring about harmony within Hawaii's society; . . . therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Sixteenth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 1991, the Senate concurring, that the Legislature determines that the year 1993 should serve Hawaii as a year of special reflection to the rights and dignities of the native Hawaiians within the Hawaiian and the American societies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii Legislature determines that the year 1993 be a special time for Hawaii, not only for special reflection of native Hawaiians, but for questioning the present and future role of people of every race who today constitute the "Hawaii society"; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature encourages the promotion of debate revolving around the future of Hawaii as a Pacific Island society, within or without the United States of America; . . .

**Background**

Proponents of various forms of sovereignty were asked in advance of the symposium to submit their general approach to the subject of economics based upon their preferred form of sovereignty. They were also requested to answer several specific questions touching on sovereignty and economics. Written responses were received from five organizations: The Institute for the Advancement of Hawaiian Affairs (IAHA), Ka Pakaukau, Ka Lahui Hawaii, Ohana Council of the Hawaiian Kingdom (OHANA) and Na Kane O Ka Malo (NA KANE). Their responses were prepared in a single booklet, copies of which were distributed to conference participants.

The participants consisted of those invited specifically and others who responded to announcements to the general public. They came from various islands of Hawaii and included visitors from other Pacific nations. They included indigenous and non-indigenous peoples of Hawaii, professionals from finance, law, government, blue collar workers, students, community organizers and farmers.

The symposium followed a very simple agenda. The proponents were given approximately 12 minutes to explain the general approach they took to economics and Hawaiian sovereignty followed by questions and comments from the symposium participants. Following this morning session, the participants were divided into separate discussion groups, attempting to mix the group members to obtain a cross section of the attendees. These groups met for approximately 1 1/2 hour, prepared a short summary and reported on their discussions to the general body at the conclusion of the day.

That evening, the discussion group leaders were asked to prepare a written summary to assist in the preparation of this report to the participants.

**Report Structure**

Overview of Sovereignty Proponents Structures

Values and Economics

Elements of Economic Plan & Strategies

Control over lands and water

Identification of national resources

Identification of Economic Resources

Sovereignty Proponents Responses

Group discussions

Further Attention to other issues

Plan for continuing work

Preparing for 2nd Hawaiian Sovereignty Economic Symposium

I. **Overview of Sovereignty Proponents Economic Approach & Political Structures**

A common thread of economic philosophy seems to run through each response from organizations supporting Hawaiian sovereignty. That thread is that the values of culture, environmental protection and healthy families were as important as the monetary exchange in measuring the worth of an economic system.

"We are attempting to find new ways of integrating peace, environmental sanity, cultural & religious values, human rights and respect for the special place of the indigenous people of Hawaii within the economic flow of our communities and nation. We are seeking to achieve not necessarily an ever-increasing gross national product but an ever improving human condition. . . . The place of the human being is central to economics," wrote IAHA in its introductory remarks.

That sentiment was expressed in other proponents' oral statements at the beginning of the symposium.

While there was general agreement to the economic approach, the political structures of Hawaiian sovereignty differed greatly among the sovereignty proponents from an independent nation model to a nation within a nation model. Four organizations identified clearly with the independence model while another identified with the internal nation model (Ka Lahui).

The independence advocates were generally agreed that the laws governing the Hawaiian nation would be laws arrived at by its citizens and not imposed by the United States of America. Those laws would be applicable over the national territory which consisted (except for the transitional approach taken by Na Kane of only some parts being independent initially) of the Hawaiian archipelago. IAHA went beyond the archipelago and included the 200 miles international exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the ocean as well as Kalama (Johnston atoll), Midway & Palmyra and their EEZs.

The internal nation model of Ka Lahui limited its territory to certain lands of Hawaii based on the "trusts" for Hawaiian and Native Hawaiian beneficiaries. It also claimed "Archipelagic jurisdiction for the exercise of native traditional and cultural rights.

Citizenship qualifications differed among the various Hawaiian sovereignty advocates. Three organizations followed a non-racial definition, permitting citizenship based on a relationship to Hawaii and a locally grounded value system, (IAHA, OHANA & NA KANE) two of which specifically required relinquishment of any other national citizenship. (IAHA & Na Kane) The two other organizations provided a racial requirement for citizenship, leaving a crack in the door for non-indigenous peoples to achieve citizenship "at appropriate time in the future" (Ka Pakaukau) and "honorary citizens" (Ka Lahui).

**II. Values and Economics**

There seems to have been universal agreement that one could not move very far into the inquiry of an economic base for a sovereign nation without first establishing the values which should be reflected in that base. Perhaps because of the introductory statements made by the sovereignty proponents or the handouts given earlier, or maybe an innate concern by those who attended the symposium, the matter of values was a constant issue and sometimes it seems, was the utmost issue of the discourse. Indeed, the very definition of economics was explored by several discussion groups, bringing the consideration back to the health of the family.

In line with the earlier theme of placing the human being and human values at the center of the approach to economics, the discussion groups, one after another, identified values which should guide the economics of a sovereign nation. They included:

Strong spiritual base

Harmony in relationships, togetherness, lokahi

Environmentally & culturally sound, "aloha aina"

Hawaii not prostituted

Quality and equity in health care

Basic needs met

Pono, Justice

Sustainability

Equitability in resource distribution

Expand lifestyle choices, meaningful work choices

Cultural survival/revival

Enoughness, simplicity of lifestyles, subsistence

Intrinsic human worth

Global Village

Community-scale, community-based economics

Family

Aloha

III. **Elements of Economic Plan & Strategies**

A. Control over lands & Waters

The questions put to the proponents in the questionnaire tried to cull out an idea of land relationship under Hawaiian sovereignty. The responses were generally the same for the independence advocates in that citizens of the Hawaiian nation should control the private lands of Hawaii. Some positions held that foreign owners could maintain their ownership (of residence only - IAHA) and that even non-resident foreigners should be able to maintain private ownership (for limited time - IAHA). The internal nation approach was that sovereignty would have no impact upon non-citizens owning land.

Control of water resources were also questioned. The independence advocates generally supported the extension of jurisdictional claim up to the 200 mile EEZ. The internal nation model made no such claim, exercising jurisdiction only over the waters which flow over native trust lands.

The discussions during the afternoon did raise interest in the question of the ocean resources if the nation's jurisdiction extended to the international exclusive economic zone. This was certainly an area for further inquiry into.

B. Listing of major resources

The proponents were asked to list 10 major resources which would form the economic base of the nation. Among those listed were:

Lands,

Ocean,

People,

Agriculture, (diversified)

Healthy Environment,

Education,

Internationalization of Financial institutions,

Specialization in high technology,

Cultural treasures between East and West,

Showcase for human rights,

Foreign trade, trade zone,

Commodities sale,

Organic foods, flowers & herbs,

Cultural Tourism,

Food Processing,

Environmental preservation & restoration-related industries,

Fishing/Aquaculture,

Airlines/airports,

Taxes: tourist, property, income, sales,

Rent, lease or license for lands or resources used,

Revenues from national businesses,

While each discussion group was not given a set of questions to answer as was given the proponents, their discussions did touch on many of the same resources identified by the proponents.

Several groups went beyond the listing of resources, discussing strategies to institute the use of Hawaii's resources to demonstrate their usefulness. Strategies for ocean resource management, community-based economic developments, subsidization of kalo production, conversion from military to civilian economies, etc. Alternative methods of finance were mentioned by a proponent group and one of the discussion groups. The possibility of learning from the Mondragon experience in Spain, worker owned business, "tanamoshi" from Japan, "the committee" from Pakistan, "Grameen Bank" experience of Bangladesh, and others.

**III. Building the Economic Models**

One view of a successful economic model was measured against the health of the family. One group pointed out that economic survival used to be a catalyst for family unity instead of family dysfunction. Families were able to engage in meaningful work choices, including self-employment and subsistence opportunities. Such work and the fact that each member of the family had a place in the life of that unit resulted in self worth of the individuals and community of family. Someone pointed out that the concern over family should call us all to the root word of economy - household! The value of such a healthy family was not measurable on the econometric scale but certainly a factor of consideration on a human centered one.

Culture, the embodiment of a people's life, encompassing sociopolitical and economic behavior, indigenous methods of taking decisions and using power and forms of relating to each other in trade and other business transactions, was seen as another important factor in the human development scale and considered to be another area of further discussion with in relations to economics.

For all the noble pronouncements of a more social definition of economics, many participants were still bothered by the hard reality of how Hawaiian sovereignty would allow for the nation's meeting basic services, generate productive work for people, secure social and medical benefits, support culturally appropriate educational systems, and be self-sufficient. Those concerns, however, can not be addressed until there is a clear understanding of the parameters of control of the Hawaiian nation. Under the completely independent model, the Hawaiian government's control is all-encompassing, having jurisdiction over international trade, ocean and fresh water resources and activities, agriculture, military, etc.. Under the internal nation model, the U.S. government, the State, the Counties and the Hawaiian nation would be competing/cooperating in claiming resources or providing services and opportunities.

Thus, the further study of the economic viability of Hawaiian sovereignty must first identify the model of sovereignty to be studied or conduct two distinct studies at the same time. It has been suggested that a single approach can indeed be taken by addressing the issue of Hawaiian sovereignty from a wholly independent model and extracting from that study, the points of relevance to the nation within a nation model. It has been further argued that such an approach would add clarity to the interim steps toward full independence as well as define the issues in addressing the question of a shared responsibility in an internal nation model.

**B. Surveying Economic Models**

Land use, land distribution, housing cost and the interrelationship with population influx, tied into employment and economic expansion and impact upon the environment related to community and individual health and education soon become a huge tangled ball of string. No single discipline can adequately address the unraveling of it all. Even a composite of the various social, political and economic disciplines will not succeed as long as they operate under the constraints of external controls such as they now exist in Hawaii. Only in an atmosphere of safety in dreaming, under assumptions of anything being possible, can we take an appropriate look at our predicament and find a workable solution.

From the discussions at the symposium, there seemed to be a general call for a green Hawaii peppered with blue and red. There are strong advocates of environmental sanity including programs for self-sufficiency and human rights, especially with regards to native Hawaiians. But there has also been a call for some "blue chip" activities such as some very highly developed technological and informational industries, international banking, educational institutions and transfer of information activities. The qualifiers for these industries seem to be environmentally and culturally friendly without requiring an influx of foreign population to meet the skills required. The red element comes in terms of social welfare and protection of the national commons. Thus government would play a role in seeing that every person is able to obtain minimum services for health care, that the ocean is protected from misuse and abuse, that the airwaves are used for social benefits and not comodified at the cost of our children's misdirection.

i) Hawaiian Experiences

It seems there are some existing demonstration projects fulfilling economic models operating in Hawaii. The community-based economic development programs ongoing and being developed at Wai‘anae, Waihole, and other places, connecting up with the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism should be looked into. These are examples of communities taking control of economic resources to sustain and lifestyle that is consistent with community cultures and values.

The economic initiatives developed in response to sugar plantations and military base closures are potential areas to watch for strategies of an independent nation. The growing interest in transforming tourism to an eco/cultural visitor relationship is another area of investigation.

The whole arena of finding alternative energy sources must be further explored. In this exploration, there must be voices from all aspects of the community so that the cultural values of the indigenous peoples will not be ignored by the environmental or economic voices. Yet, there must be a balance among discussants to assure that no single interest will be able to outshout the rest.

Some discussions regarding ocean governance of the full 200 mile exclusive economic zone have been taking place but without sufficient public support and without the daring to dream. There still remains the mental limitation of the U.S. government's exclusive exercise of that territory. More support needs to be given in that area, ranging not only from the issue of governance but of the potential economic opportunities, the need to control the prevention of pollution, the protection of fisheries, the exploration of the sea beds, the potential for harvesting the ocean not only for fish but for pharmaceutical purposes, scientific and educational purposes, as well as recreation. Already, the ocean (mainly recreation) plays a larger economic role in Hawaii's economy than does agriculture.

ii) The Pacific Experience

Many other Pacific places have shared Hawaii's predicament and have resolved them in one or another way. Some of their resolutions have come in the form of multi-national cooperative organizations such as the Pacific Islands Development Corporation or trading blocks or environmental protection agencies. Not only can we find national models and cooperative regimes in the Pacific, but we may also be able to find particular indigenous economic models such as the experience of the Maori of Aotearoa (New Zealand).

Within the Pacific, there seems to be much economic activities. Trade between Papua New Guinea and Australia amounts to $1.2 Billion (what dollars?) and New Zealand and other pacific Islands, about $653 million (what dollars?). The fact of our cultural similarities could be developed into commercial ties by which Hawaii could provide expertise in tourism, agriculture, ocean studies, public health, and education, forming sort of a Pacific Basin trading hub.

In the review of Pacific Islands experiences, we could also inquire into the models of government those islands have followed and the economic basis and impacts flowing from those models. Are there alternatives to constitutional and parliamentary forms of government which might be considered for a sovereign Hawaiian nation?

iii) The World Experience

Presently, there are a multitude of ideas encircling the international community regarding new economic thinking. We are very much aware of the push by the major industrial countries for the breaking down of trade barriers to permit greater access to markets throughout the world, greater access to raw materials and cheap labor in third world countries, and opportunities to create dependency of poorer countries upon the industrial North countries. Such breaking down of trade barriers will also result in the easier access to political and military control within weaker countries.

There is an equally legitimate argument against the universalizing of the world economy, the call for self-sufficiency within communities, the belief that small is beautiful and that diversity must be protected from the invasion of mass production and marketing.

Hawaii's people must take an active interest in this debate. It addresses the heart of the discussion of self-sufficiency, of community-value based economic development, of job availability and choices which carries with it dignity, in holding families together, of protecting Hawaii's population growth, etc. That question affects the very question of the education we provide for our young, the regard for human rights and human value we show in our economic choices, our behavior toward our environmental resources. The day may not be very far away when these questions will become questions of greatest importance to us as we try to apply social, ethical and moral principles to our economic decisions.

**IV. SPECIFIC AREAS OF INQUIRY**

We have already mentioned numerous areas which deserve greater inquiry. But there are as many more areas of specific inquiry as there are dreams of Hawaii's future. We attempt in this section to collect under general categories those areas of inquiry already mentioned and some not yet discussed. The reader may wish to include others.

The general question we tried to address in this symposium was: What is the economic viability of Hawaiian sovereignty? For the time being, let us presume that the Hawaiian sovereignty is the model of independence of the Hawaiian archipelago as well as Kalama, Palmyra and Midway Islands including the 200 mile exclusive economic zone. From this most expansive view of Hawaiian sovereignty, we can narrow our visions as we consider a narrower model of sovereignty or as we address the transitional considerations of achieving such sovereignty status.

**Ocean**: Development of an underlying philosophy or policy with regard to the ocean, considering Hawaiian religious and cultural practices, environmental issues, our Pacific island cousins and economic potentials. Limited to the Hawaiian archipelago, the EEZ (excluding the three mile state territorial sea) measures nearly one-third of the U.S. continental land mass, 922,967 square miles. Ocean industries are among the fastest growth industries in Hawaii. These industries are: aquaculture, commercial fishing, ocean research, seafood marketing, ocean recreation and maritime (shipbuilding and repairing, and cargo transportation). Source: DBEDT

a) Monitoring and controlling our marine and coastal fisheries, adjusting fishing license and collecting royalties on catches over amounts necessary for household uses. Maintaining systems of monitoring fish catch and stocks.

b) Special licensing and royalties for sport fishing.

c) Commercial marine mining of coral, sand, nickel-cobalt nodules and manganese nodules

d) Ocean research in the fields of aquaculture, marine biology, marine chemistry, energy, engineering, fisheries, geophysics, law and policy, mining and minerals, mariculture, oceanography, pollution, recreation, resource economics, surveying and mapping, transportation and water quality all have economic development potential. Marine pharmacology research out of the University of Hawaii, if given appropriate financial support, could prove to be one of the great surprises for Hawaii's economy. The ongoing research on sponge and blue-green algae potentially containing anti-cancer properties and HIV solutions may place Hawaii on the "map" as a center for marine and terrestrial pharmaceutical research for the Pacific Islands.

e) Ocean recreation revenues is on the verge of exceeding agricultural production revenues. Between 1981 and 1990, employment in this area more than tripled, revenues increased by 300% to $509 million. Revenues were highest in the tour boat and cruise ship sectors. Only Hawaiian canoe racing failed to increase in gross revenues and actually declined in real terms over this period. What are the implications to lifestyles as 85,000 take boat trips out Hanalei to the Na Pali Coast in 1990?

**AGRICULTURE**

**CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

**EDUCATION**

**INTERNATIONALLY ENGAGED FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

**HAWAIIAN ENVIRONMENT**

**ORGANIC FOOD, MEDICINE, FLOWERS**

**TOURISM**

**TAXES**

**GOVERNMENT LANDS**

**VI. PLAN FOR CONTINUING WORK**

[[Rewrite covering these areas]]

Encourage people getting together prior to September 25 to work on one or another of these areas.

Use Tanya, if necessary, as a coordinator of interested people in working on specific subjects with others.

Unfortunately, the funding earlier promised has not been forthcoming and we are therefore unable to provide the research and computer support we had hoped to provide.

We encourage the development of papers for presentation in September.

As we develop the program for the September 25 symposium, we hope to maintain continuing contact with you so that the program will reflect the work accomplished during this period and the future discussion will be on point and relevant to the available materials and resources on hand at the time.